

## MESSAGE

FROM THE

### PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

*In compliance with a resolution of the Senate, on the subject of Depredations by the Mexicans on the Property of Messrs. Chouteau and Demun.*

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JUNE 15, 1836.

Read, and ordered to be printed.

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*To the Senate of the United States :*

I transmit a report of the Secretary of State, prepared in compliance with the resolution of the Senate of the 11th instant, upon the subject of the depredations of the Mexicans on the property of Messrs. Chouteau and Demun.

ANDREW JACKSON.

WASHINGTON, June 14, 1836.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE,

Washington, June 14, 1836.

*To the PRESIDENT of the United States:*

The Secretary of State, to whom has been referred the resolution of the Senate of the 11th instant, requesting the President to send to that body all the information in his possession respecting the depredations of the Mexicans on the property of Messrs. Chouteau and Demun, has the honor to report that the accompanying papers contain all the information upon the subject in the possession of this Department, in addition to that communicated to the House of Representatives by the President of the United States with his message of the 15th of April, 1818, constituting document No. 197 of the 8th volume of State Papers of the first session of the fifteenth Congress, to which the Secretary of State begs leave to refer.\*

All which is respectfully submitted.

JOHN FORSYTH.

#### LIST.

1. Messrs. Chouteau and Demun to Mr. Clay, 3d May, 1825.
2. Mr. Brent to Mr. Poinsett, 27th May, 1825.
3. Mr. Poinsett to Mr. Clay, (extract,) 23d November, 1825.

*Messrs. Chouteau and Demun to Mr. Clay.*

ST. LOUIS, May 3, 1825.

SIR: We beg leave, through you, to call the attention of the President to the injury which we received from the Government of New Mexico in the year 1817.

We were at that time trading upon the Arkansas, with a large adventure of merchandise, under a regular license from the Governor of Missouri, and while engaged in a lawful occupation, upon the soil of our own country, we were forcibly seized by a military force sent out by the Governor of New Mexico, conveyed as prisoners to Santa Fe, subjected to mock trials, imprisoned six weeks, menaced with death, deprived of our property, and finally turned loose to return to the United States by such means as we could.

Upon arriving at our residence in Missouri, we lost no time in laying before the President of the United States a true and faithful account of the injury done us, accompanied by ample proofs, and had the satisfaction to see that an immediate demand for reparation was made upon the King of Spain. A treaty having been concluded between the two Governments in the year 1819, stipulating for indemnities, &c., we caused our claim to be put into the hands of able counsel, Messrs. Hunter, of Rhode Island, and Law, of Washington, with a view to its reclamation before the board of commissioners established under that treaty, but the claim not being embraced by its provisions, nothing could be recovered for us. We consider the treaty, however, as an effectual bar to any recovery from the King of Spain, but do not think that it releases the Government of the United States from her obligation to protect the persons and property of her citizens, nor the Government of Mexico (although it has changed its form) from her moral duty to refund that which, having no right to take, she cannot rightfully retain. We flatter ourselves that, in negotiating with Mexico, and in establishing the relations of friendship and commerce between the two Powers, there will be no difficulty in adjusting our claim—an item so inconsiderable in the affairs of nations, but of such serious amount to a couple of individuals. We, therefore, most earnestly entreat that the President will charge our minister in Mexico with the reclamation of our demand.

The papers heretofore filed in the Department of State prove an actual loss of merchandise and property, exceeding in value the sum of \$30,000; upon which we claim interest since May, 1817, and damages for the false imprisonment of our persons, and total interruption of our business. The sum of \$50,000, we most solemnly aver, will be an inadequate reparation for what we have suffered. The statement of our whole case, with the proofs to support it, will be found in the public documents, printed by order Congress, about the year 1818, and in Waits' State Papers, embracing the transactions of that year. To these we refer, and, if the President finds it consistent with his sense of justice to interpose in our behalf, we request that the document may be copied and the copy transmitted to the minister of the United States in Mexico.

After bearing our loss for eight years, we are encouraged to renew our application for redress at this time, because we have seen in the President's \* letter to Don Louis de Onis, of April 11th, 1818, that he

\* When Secretary of State.

was thoroughly convinced of the enormous injury done to us, and sincerely desirous to obtain for us an adequate reparation.

Respectfully, sir,

Your obedient servants,

A. P. CHOUTEAU,  
JULIUS DEMUN.

The Hon. HENRY CLAY,  
*Secretary of State.*

*Mr. Brent to Mr. Poinsett.*

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,

*Washington, May 27, 1825.*

SIR: I do myself the honor, in the absence of the Secretary, to transmit to you, herewith, the copy of a letter from A. P. Chouteau and Julius Demun, dated at St. Louis, the 3d of this month, soliciting the interposition of the Government towards obtaining for them, from that of Mexico, a compensation in damages for the personal wrongs which they suffered at Santa Fe, in the year 1817, under the authority of the then Government of New Mexico, which is now merged in that of the United States of Mexico, and a full indemnification for the loss of property which they likewise incurred upon the same occasion. For a detailed statement of all the circumstances of their case, I beg leave to refer you to page 435 of the 12th volume of Waits' State Papers, in a message from the President of the United States to the House of Representatives, of the 15th April, 1818. If it should be in your power, through the interposition of your good offices, to obtain for the sufferers the redress to which they appear to be well entitled from the present Government of Mexico, I am well satisfied that they will be so employed.

I am, with the highest respect, sir,

Your obedient and humble servant,

DANIEL BRENT.

JOEL R. POINSETT, Esq.,  
*Envoy Extraordinary and Minister  
Plenipotentiary of the United States to Mexico.*

*Mr. Poinsett to Mr. Clay. (Extract.)*

[No. 27.]

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,

*Mexico, November 23, 1825.*

SIR: Mr. Brent's letter respecting the claim of Messrs. A. P. Chouteau and Julius Demun, came in the Eliza, from New York, together with your despatch No. 5. As the first is dated 27th May, and the second 24th of September, there must have been some neglect in forwarding Mr. Brent's letter. I feel desirous that this circumstance should be explained to the claimants, and that they may be assured I shall now urge their claim zealously, and, I trust, effectually.

was brought into the room of the deceased left door at 10 and narrowly  
missed to strike him in the back of the head.

Respectfully,  
J. Edgar Hoover

Very truly yours,  
J. Edgar Hoover

Mr. J. Edgar Hoover  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Hoover:

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst.

and in reply to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper  
authorities for their consideration.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,  
Your obedient servant,  
J. Edgar Hoover

Very truly yours,  
J. Edgar Hoover

Enclosure

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